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Christianity and Historicity: Faith and the World

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certain exercises found in the BSCS edition. In fact, in some instances, this reviewer doubts that some of the adapted exercises, which involve the use of compound microscopes, can be performed satisfactorily in most of our high schools. It is a common observation that many Philippine high schools have only one or two microscopes for a class of forty or fifty students.

In spite of the existence of the *Teacher's Guide*, it seems clear that a teachers' training program is still necessary for the successful implementation of some exercises. I refer, for example, to the exercises involving the study and cultivation of microbes.

There is, nevertheless, no question that the introduction and the adaptation of BSCS materials in the Philippines is a step forward in the task of upgrading and updating the teaching of Biology in Philippine high schools.

JAIME C. JOAQUIN

CHRISTIANITY AND HISTORICITY

FAITH AND THE WORLD. By Albert Dondeyne. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1963, 317 pp.

This work, written by a professor of the University of Louvain, is the first of a theological series that is to be published by the Duquesne University Press. It establishes a dialogue between faith and civilization, showing by a profound analysis the autonomous nature of each, and the relations and tensions that exist between them in the world of today.

Dondeyne believes that several factors, especially, have contributed to bring about the crisis of faith which people, in an ever increasing number, are passing through today. The exact study of nature and the development of the historical sciences have made modern man less naive, more critical with regard to truth and knowledge, particularly when they concern supernatural realities. Furthermore, technology is reducing the distances that formerly separated peoples and cultures, and is bringing about the unification of a spiritually heterogeneous world in which believers and non-believers meet and work together. Modern man, therefore, needs personal insight and conviction to support his moral and religious life against the ever present danger of relativism and skepticism. Finally, the new and incredible projects that science and technology are making possible for him in his profane task of building a civilization, threaten to absorb his entire attention and to eliminate concern for the religious dimension of his existence.

Twentieth century man questions the faith, but a faith that is challenged, that is not merely passively accepted, can result in a belief that is more personal and authentic, because it speaks to him at the deepest level of his freedom. The Christian community, therefore, has the most important task of providing answers to these fundamental questions: What does it mean to believe? What are the reasons why we should believe? What is the significance of belief for our civilization? For while Christianity is not primarily a humanism, it must manifest itself to each new generation with its variable appreciation of values, as in harmony with its aspirations.

Questioning man inquires what can be done to transform the raw materials of nature into a world that will be a dwelling place worthy of man. But reflecting on the meaning of the whole of his project as a being-in-the-world, he goes deeper and also asks himself: What ultimately may I hope for? For he finds himself incapable of success in his pursuit of liberation, self-realization, joy and peace. The 'power to sin' within him renders ineffective his determination to lead a morally good life. Injustice everywhere rules, for 'Blind Fate' takes no account of the goodness or wickedness of men when apportioning the joys and riches of earth. All human existence and achievement appear, finally, to be completely meaningless and absurd, when seen in the shadow of death. "There is but one truly serious philosophical problem," Albert Camus has written, "namely, suicide. To judge that life is or is not worth living, is to reply to the fundamental question of philosophy." To admit that no earthly project can provide a satisfying answer to this question, and to express at the same time the hope that there is One above who is good and forgiving, truthful and just, who can, beyond death, give that answer and gratify man's craving for the fulness of existence, is to utter a cry for salvation, for the freedom which will bring all human activity into a completely meaningful unity.

Christianity announces the fulfillment beyond all expectation of this yearning for salvation, the definitive realization of the promise God made to Israel: "I am with you." Because of the death and resurrection of Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, there is among men the most perfect liberating presence of God. He frees men from the paralyzing domination of sin, bestows on them a life that is eternal, and transforms through love their relations with one another. St. Paul spoke of this when he wrote: "The fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace; patience, kindness, goodness; faith, modesty, continency" (Gal. 5:22-23).

There is, in principle, no opposition between religious faith, which renders us open to God and His work of salvation, and secular science and culture, by which we subjugate nature and humanize our surroundings. Nevertheless, difficulties between faith and science have

arisen whenever one or the other exceeded its proper limits. Galileo justly complained of the opposition of the Holy Office when he asked what difference it made for man's eternal salvation, whether the sun moves around the earth or vice versa. On the other hand, the evidence of evolution has sometimes been proposed by scientists as reason for discarding the idea of creation.

These tensions have had the good effect of purifying our notion of faith and of leading us to a clearer knowledge of what we should, and should not, look for in revelation. We realize better now that fundamentally it tells us of the plan of God for our salvation, of the mystery of His love; to hold that it is a revealed geology or biology, is to miss its sublime meaning.

Dondeyne believes that we are now at one of the turning points in history that occur whenever there is a clash between the existing cultural situation and the new possibilities that unexpectedly present themselves in the wake of some great material or spiritual discovery. While it is a moment that is full of hope for the future, it is also fraught with the danger that some important values will be lost sight of in the effort to realize the ones that newly attract us.

The tremendous advances made in the positive sciences and technology during recent decades are creating glowing prospects not merely of an improved standard of living but also of a new manner of life. For the material forces of nature which formerly held mastery over man are now gradually being brought under his control, and serving to help him achieve a progressive liberation of his spirit. Technology, however, while it liberates man, also poses the great danger that the human person will ultimately lose his significance, and his labor its value, in a vast complex of machines geared for mass production and controlled by an impersonal bureaucracy. The world of the future, said Bergson, expects a "supplement of soul", meaning by this, that it will have need of more "spirit", of a deeper moral and religious sense, to offset the dehumanizing effects of technology.

It is due, in part, to technology that modern man has awakened to the knowledge that he is by nature a history-making being, that the responsibility is largely his, for the great changes that take place in the history of civilization. Man has always made history, but never before has he realized so clearly how much the future is a free creation of his own. The ancient Greeks, for example, were convinced that the course of all things is strictly determined by Fate, and this conviction suppressed their awareness of historicity. The men of the Middle Ages, also, because they were constantly beset by such fearful calamities as floods, famines, and epidemics, were far too mindful of the uncertainties of earthly life, to be deeply moved by the possibilities of new worlds to construct, that it offered them.

The effects of this recent awareness of historicity are strikingly evident in the social revolution now taking place. The crying social and economic evils, patiently endured for so long by mankind, have become intolerable because they are perceived for the first time as unnecessary and remediable. Technology now makes it possible for all men to share in the benefits of education and medicine, better housing and working conditions, benefits that were formerly the privileges of a minority.

It was the ethical ideal of liberty and fraternity, which sparked the French Revolution, that was to secure for the masses in France and eventually throughout the world the realization of political democracy, equality before the law. It is the same ideal today that is causing a great yearning for social and economic democracy in the heart of all humanity, particularly in the underdeveloped nations. Such a democracy would put an end to the economic slavery which deprives the laborer of a fair share of the wealth created by his toil, and also provide the sufficient guarantee that henceforth the economy will serve nothing less than all mankind. Marx was right in claiming for economics a decisive influence in the liberation of man. What is at stake is not only a higher standard of living, but the totality of the social and economic conditions needed to allow man freely to develop his powers, liberate his mind, and achieve that degree of self-realization which is commensurate with his human dignity and natural capacities. In short, the ultimate goal of the social struggle is the building of a world that is ruled, not by the anonymous power of money, but by a genuine recognition of man by man.

"The greatest fault that Christians of the twentieth century could commit", wrote Cardinal Suhard, "would be to let the world organize and unify itself without them." This unification is primarily a social one, a lessening of the great social and economic differences that have separated the rich from the poor. Nothing would present a greater hindrance to their task of making known and felt God's saving love for man, than a lack of sensitivity on the part of Christians for the value of social justice, in all its dimensions, which is the animating force of today's world. Unfortunately, since the dissolution of the Old Regime, Catholics have been slow to manifest their sympathy with the great political, social, and economic changes that have been taking place.

It is necessary, therefore, to stress in our day the positive and dynamic nature of Christian love, a love that cannot be at rest as long as others are deprived of the benefits we want for ourselves, such as justice and dignity, education and opportunity, as well as the true faith. When Christians manifest effective brotherly love, in open sympathy with the inexhaustible urge for creative justice, that is one of the most promising signs of today's world, then will people stop thinking of the Church as being a relic of the past, living in a world

apart, and not interested in the progress of mankind. Where there is sympathy and co-operation, there will be dialogue. And where the Church conducts a dialogue, there will her message be heard, and room created for God's liberating work, which gives the supreme meaning to human life and civilization.

JOHN P. RUANE

ON THE FUNDAMENTAL PHILOSOPHICAL DUALITY

LOGIC AND EXISTENCE. By Martin Foss. New York: Philosophical Library, 1962. 240 pp.

The ground covered by Martin Foss in *Logic and Existence* is both familiar and extensive. At the start of this philosophical journey the reader is immediately confronted with those telltale terms in philosophy: subjectivity and objectivity, thought and being, Eastern "Nothing" and Western "Being", and finally the quest for transcendence, the overcoming of the abyss between abstract thought and concrete reality.

The range and sweep of treatment revealed through the course of the book is quite impressive. It starts from logic and the relations of exclusion and identity, necessity and possibility; then shades off to mathematics, numbers, operations, the continuum and the infinite. From the concept of the Infinite in the mathematical realm, the ground of numbers and operations, one is led to the related ideas of the space-time-given, of substance, accidents, cause and effect. At this point the reader begins to be aware that the terms, Infinite, Given, Ground, Fact, Being, and Reality are not so much related ideas as variations of a fundamental, underlying reality. At the end of Part I, Abstraction, one is introduced to a new variation, the idea of Power or Force. Thus one is prepared to enter into Part II, Reality, where the author comes into grips with the dynamisms of life, world, existence, personality, destiny, freedom, sin, guilt, sacrifice, love, value, art, and creation.

The author avoids the traditional scholastic division between philosophy and theology and somehow succeeds to articulate in a unifying treatment the fields of logic, mathematics, physics, theology, ethics, and art. If the author has succeeded in making a unified presentation, this is due as much from the unity underlying the reality of thinking and being as from the use of a few basic mechanics of presentation. One of these is substitution or variation of terms. As a new context is opened up a set of new terms is substituted. The best exam-